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## THE ETHICAL VALUE OF INDIVIDUALITY.

JAMES LINDSAY.

THE distinctive value, the peculiar worth, of man lies in individuality. His moral nature gives him intrinsic value. Every man is, in some sort, an individual, but he is not true individual until he has gotten individuality, of which, indeed, few men are fully possessed. Individuality is that which truly distinguishes a man from every other being of his kind. The individual is the last and irreducible element of reality. Few things defy analysis so completely as individuality, but at least it must comprise the notes of unity, incommunicableness, and, in a certain sense, impenetrability, as constitutive elements. There are those, of course, who object to "impenetrability" in this connection, and who urge that distinction merely, not separateness, is the sign of individuality; but those who are so fearful of "each in his separate star" generally end by doing less than justice to individuality, in any substantive or significant sense. The distinctness of all souls is that of being concrete existents, and cannot be satisfactorily held for anything less. There is a clearly realised individuality of the soul which feels and loves; and an individuality of the mind which thinks and comprehends. But for individuality, as I now take it, there must be a synthesis of these two: their union or fusion is necessary to individuality, in true full sense. For individuality is a true indivisible unity. By how much soever their union or fusion is imperfect, by so much is the individuality impaired. Such individuality is concrete and essential; it imports ethical being; it implies the possession of all our powers, thoughts, qualities, opinions, standards, values, so that we are determined by ourselves, not by society. It is not implied, of course, that such individuality is sufficient unto itself, in the sense that it rejects the inheritance of the ages, or spurns the reciprocities of society.

Personality has been by Bradley and some other philosophers emphasised in its essentially individual or limited character or aspect, but personality is no such exclusive thing, but, though importing a being-for-self, carries the capacity for going beyond the self and entering into relations with others. But what marks such outgoings of personality is just the individuality—the characteristically individual features—of personal life, related, as such, to other persons. For it is essential to personality to recognise the value of other personalities. Not a very satisfactory definition of personality is that which Hegel has given in his “Philosophy of Right,” when he describes it as “the free being in pure self-conscious isolation,” since the “being” is not wholly “free” and the isolation is by no means so “pure” or complete. Individuality does not efface or immolate itself—its moral existence—for society or the state, even if we take these to be logically prior to the individual. In the order of history it may be the reverse, but that is not now the view of historical criticism, at any rate. Individuality, in any case, takes from society and the state what they can give, but it gives to them the best they hold—whatever they may have of savour, strength, reality, value, life. This it does most freely and naturally, for liberty is the vital breath, the native air, of individuality. The solidarity of mankind is without prejudice to this liberty. Man is made for society, for association; but the fact that society is essential to man does not make society greater than he, for society grows out of the individual, his needs and attributes. Its importance, it has been said, is only his importance under another name. He is master of himself—according to individuality, not according to the very different thing named individualism—in order that he may be able to give himself freely to the service of all. Without such individuality there can be neither real morality nor real religion. His consciousness of personal ends and values, and of the power to realise them, makes the individual the original source and constituent of all real value. I say these things in full knowledge, of course, of those current

theories which, contrariwise, make everything of society or the community, and treat the individual as of no inherent value, but dependent for all rights and value upon society—theories which I account ethically indefensible and undesirable. The individuality on which I am insisting involves that the conscious individual find himself an end in and for himself. As such, he has claims to consideration and respect, and not simply as a member of a group. His ends and choices, right and rational, are individually his own, else they lack all ethical value. He is thus no mere product of the social order, as is often absurdly said of a being of ideas and purposes all his own. As a free, self-conscious being, he is no such mechanical product. He is, on the contrary, the corrector and transcender of society, the reviser and raiser of its values, in so far as he has individuality enough. Neither upon society nor the state nor any external authority whatever does he depend for the right to be a free, self-conscious being, capable of realising personal ends and values.

Wundt, of course, has been pleased to speak of organized communities as though they were psychological entities, ascribing to them *Gesammbewusstsein* and *Gesammtwille*, and Royce, in what I cannot but think a too facile manner, seems disposed to accept Wundt's position that such communities are wholes or entities, and have, or are, minds. All the attempts of Royce and others to treat the community as an organism in any way comparable to the real being of the living individual—as possessed of true individuality—remain singularly futile and unconvincing. Individuals are self-conscious and self-determining, not mechanical parts of a quasi-physical organism. Dr. Bosanquet says, in an Aristotelian Society paper, that "the conception of general will" involves the existence of an actual community "of such a nature as to share an identical mind and feeling." If this somewhat loose mode of expression is meant to claim for the community something on the level of the unity of the self-identical mind of the individual, it is to be decisively rejected. The more so, as later in the same paper, he

speaks of "the community" as "an individual in a far deeper sense than the citizen, being the nearest approach to a true individual that exists upon the earth"—an ethical treatment of human "individuality and value" that appears to be the result of his characteristically imperfect view of the nature of the individual. I hold, as does, I observe, Dr. D'Arcy also, that the self is "the most definite unit which thought is able to conceive." Lévy-Bruhl says that, "in fact, the ethical homogeneity of a human society at any moment is always only apparent." (*Ethics and Moral Science*, p. 217.) It is of little avail for Dr. Bosanquet to speak, at one moment, of man's individuality as a "world," and at another moment—as here—to treat it as a shrunken, dependent, insignificant "part of the communal will." He is far too completely the victim of verbalism and doctrinaire notions of "group-life" and collectivism to be able to do justice to ethical individuality: he never sees the tree for the wood. One may well allow a certain use and interest to the facts and phenomena of the natural history of such collectivism, and yet feel that we should have to hoodwink our critical reason pretty thoroughly before we could ascribe to it any value of the character intended. Moral individuality implies a personal worth and value not found in the members of a physical organism. The attempt to raise the organized community to the level of the real being of the personal entity utterly breaks down before the really individual character of all consciousness. Without such consciousness there is neither meaning nor value.

Of course, our individuality is developed through the contacts of society. But, whatever we may allow to the so-called social consciousness, we cannot admit that it is at all comparable to, or to be confounded with, consciousness in the strict, proper, uniquely individual sense just spoken of. Even Royce has said that experience must be at least individual, and with that one entirely agrees, though whether he has really allowed it to be so is quite another matter. I cannot find that he has done justice either to individuality or to the liberty characteristic of it. Of

course, an individualism, like that of the eighteenth century, which isolates man as though he were sovereign and a law to himself, is untenable and absurd, and liberty is curtailed, or it may be, by the laws of duty. But liberty is, for all that, a distinguishing characteristic of man, and marks him off from the animal kingdom. We have need to be very jealous of the tendencies of some philosophers to biologise human intelligence, liberty, and even the spiritual life itself, for deadly issues lie behind these positions. Fruitfulness in such directions belongs no more to the reasonable order of things than does the expectation of grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, or roses from the salt, unchanging sea. The procedure is one of the confounding or obliterating of qualitative differences, and shearing off the edge of the distinctively ethical consciousness. "The question of value," Dr. Bosanquet rightly remarks, "is really distinct from that of the nature of the causal connection between mind and body." ("The Psychology of the Moral Self," p. 124.) Elsewhere he says truly, "Individuality will shew itself as inwardness and spirituality, not by emptiness and abstraction, not even by blank intensity of incommunicable feeling, but, in a word, by the characteristics of 'a world'." ("Individuality and Value," p. 77.) Individuality is, to me, unique as the being one's self; it is positive in quality and content. I agree that "its essence lies in the richness and completeness of a self." (*Ibid.*, p. 69.) Nevertheless, the position is unsatisfactory when, later (*Ibid.*, p. 286), individuality is taken by Bosanquet to mean "mind," "a mind," for this is easily capable of being taken, and is, in fact, taken in a too abstract and merely intellectualistic sense, so that the ethical side of individuality is far from having justice done to it. The finite individual is thus left to be a "part" of, or to "participation" in, a logical whole without any proper or adequate account of his union or fusion with the absolute through free, voluntary ethical union. The defect is radical, and inherent in all such abstractly intellectualistic systems or modes of thought. These have no other idea than of self-consciousness con-

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ceived in a purely intellectual fashion, but that aspect is far enough removed from true individuality. The single self-consciousnesses are left so much of an equal value that the essential non-substitutional character of individuality is missed. There is more in us than the logical function of reason, though that is important enough; and reason itself craves something higher, more transcendental, than to be a "participant" in an impersonal, non-ethical whole. Individuality is one and indivisible—a living unity. I do not, of course, deny the logical functioning of individuality, but that such logical functioning exhausts it, is the whole of it. Ethical individuality insists on the unity of the mind or soul in its entirety being recognised. There has, however, been no adequate care to preserve in its integrity the character of individuality as "a world" in the ultimate dropping to a "part." But individuality is and remains a fact, whether recognised or resisted.

Individuality had little real place among the Stoics, for they asserted it only to efface or abolish it; Stoic individuality lay in the paradoxical suppression of individual interests and pleasures; there was too little distinctness of being for any real fostering of ethical individuality. But, indeed, "Stoic ethics are not based on the needs of the individual, but on the demands of the supreme law." (E. V. Arnold, "Roman Stoicism," p. 273.) The Neo-Platonic view of individuality, also, was a despairing one, albeit it provided a certain goal for human striving in its theory of mystic contemplation. This, although in the "Enneads" of Plotinus, there is now a basis for individuality as representative of idea in the Divine Mind, and so participant of the Divine universality, and now a treatment of the individual as a mere constituent element of the Universal Soul, with whose unity a certain independence of the individual is compatible. But there is little that can be said, in any real sense, to make for ethical individuality, and what there is makes for the purifying of thought rather than for ethical action. Individuality had no great measure of justice meted out to it in the Middle Ages. Albertus Magnus, for

example, in common with the Arabian philosophers, was inclined to connect individuality with the body or matter, as representing existence in its divided state in the world. A defective view, of course, although I am not at all concerned to deny that the character of individuality is more or less determined by the physical organization. I do not now dwell on the Thomist and Scotist theories of individuality, valuable as they were, since they are of metaphysical rather than ethical interest. Origen, long before, had, on the contrary, derived individuality from the mind itself—from its use of freedom—which, however, is not adequate to account for it. Leibniz treated *de principio individui*, and maintained every being to be individuated in its entirety (*totum ens in se toto individuatur*). Indeed, for Leibniz, individuality was, further, expressive of the place of individual things in a system. Only in a developing system of categories can realities of such an implied relational type be known. Hence the complementary character of Kant's teaching concerning the categories. But Kant and Hegel were too much inclined to regard individuality as only a limitation, and did not appreciate it as the condition of the realisation of the ethical world. Schleiermacher, however, did better, albeit in a manner still too quantitative, rather than qualitative; he thought the soul sustained a peculiar modification through its connection with the body; he saw a reason for individuality in the relation of the ego to the non-ego; each individual had, for him, the psychical peculiarity predetermined or implanted within him so as to constitute him a peculiar soul: his spiritual individuality was seen in a somewhat too sentimental and romanticist—for so it must be said—"marriage in him of the Infinite with the finite"; and he thought the whole of humanity became individualised in each soul in a particular way. Schopenhauer missed the ethical value of individuality very completely when his system allowed the individual to be dissolved in the ceaseless movement of the world-will without goal. He also made the grave mistake of dethroning reason, and reducing it to the level of a mere temporary



organ of the will. Individuality he tended to confound with spatial and temporal individuation. It is not to be overlooked that our individuality, whatever its uniqueness, is set in an infinitely larger whole, which you may call the social order if you will. But that does not keep it from being true that Hegel failed to do justice to ethical individuality—as his modern followers also do—the individual, in his system, being relegated to a secondary place in more aspects than one. The individual is, in a true sense, in and for itself; it cannot be itself save as it is not anything or anyone else; but it is yet not for itself alone, for only in and through its other can it fulfil itself—even for itself. Still, no *alter ego* can keep the individual from being himself: as a self-conscious ego, he remains—after every recognition of the whole in which he is set—the centre of his own universe. I have not meant to suggest that individuality is anything but beginning rather than end; it is for the larger social whole; but it is for it as free, self-possessed individuality, giving itself, dedicating itself, to the service of the whole in voluntary, unconstrained fashion. But in my service to the whole, I do not lose my individuality; it still remains true that I am I. Thus I preserve my freedom, so essential to ethical value. Yet, though I am I, consciously and intensely individual, there is no reason why, as Schleiermacher suggested, the whole of humankind should not, in a sense, pulsate through me. For though my individuality is real, I am not atomic and independent of the race. It is by sympathy individuality manifests itself. I realise myself only in and through the community of men, or the whole. But society, as organised whole, must immanently allow the fulfilment of my free individuality, if the whole is not to fail of its end. Thought, it has been said, “does nothing to annul the fact of individuality as it is given in perception, and it is necessary that it should have no such power; because it is only individual human organisms that manifest the conditions on which universal thought should be possible.” (C. Read, “Natural and Social Morals,” Introduction.) And such thought must, before

all things, be free, free even to rise above the externality of law, if need be. This is not to forget that every free, self-active being is under universal ethical law. There has certainly (however necessarily) been in our time great loss of faith in freedom—a deplorable loss. I am of those who think there has been an unhappy tendency on the part of the modern state—as a political engine or structure—to interfere unduly and harmfully at times with individuality and freedom. Nothing can compensate the loss of freedom and individuality, to conserve which should be primary aims of state control and governance. The words of Mill have lost none of their truth: “The worth of a state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it”; “a state which dwarfs its men, in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands even for beneficial purposes, will find that with small men no great thing can be accomplished; and that the perfection of machinery to which it has sacrificed everything, will in the end avail it nothing, for want of the vital power which, in order that the machine might work more smoothly, it has preferred to banish.” How true of Germany, it will be said; yes, but a not unneeded monition for Britain and America, too. The harmonization of private good with the good of the state is that which the state exists, in ways just and equal, to effect. This without infringing man’s essential liberty or inherent dignity. It is a primary need of the individual to be member of a stable social organism. But the savour of society must be found in true individuality.

There can be no doubt of the need to cultivate what, by a bold metaphor, is called the state conscience. The state should govern, but states do not always do even that; and why then should they so often take upon themselves to crush individual initiative, and induce individual helplessness? To say that the individual has no interests apart from the state, none but what society confers upon him, is a soul-destroying and pernicious doctrine. This tendency to state absolutism is a real danger to-day, and in the absolutism of the state, the soul—wherever it is a soul—cannot

acquiesce. The soul cannot deny itself; that were to deny the God that made it. The soul, conscious of itself—its intrinsic worth or absolute value—can never rank itself below the state. That is its declared ethical position. Does that preclude its sacrifice of itself for the state? By no means. For it is precisely the soul that feels the call of a time wherein—

“ ’Tis man’s perdition to be safe,

When for the truth he ought to die.” (Emerson.)

But that is more than the call of a mere absolutist state. An absolutist state that recognises nothing higher than itself is an atheistic monster, to be loathed not loved. The state, as organ of conservation, is apt to be repressive of individuality, but cannot get rid of it. For the agents of its activity are yet personalities; even an oppressive state needs individuality in its instruments. If society, however, is organic, and everything organic is circular—Hegel said every part of philosophy is a circle—then there are reciprocities wherein State authority and individual independence should be properly guaranteed and adjusted. The state did not make me, nor give me my powers, and it does not merit my first allegiance; the state does not keep my conscience for me; behind all human authority, ultimate sovereignty belongs to God alone, to Whom I am primarily responsible. That is the prerogative of my individuality, which is not inconsistent with society, and does not make otherwise than for social evolution. The state may seek my improvement as a citizen, but it does not belong to the state to fashion me as a personality, or to shape my moral individuality. The inner citadel of my individuality or personal moral being is immune from state interference, and is a matter for God and myself alone. For I am a being whose essential principle is that I am responsible for my own destiny. The state is, however, to be recognised as, in some sort, a divinely ordained institution for certain righteous and specific purposes, but it is bound to recognise, and act under, ethical law. A British philosopher has lately spoken of the state as “the guardian of moral values,”

while an American writer has declared that "government is the highest expression of the social conscience, and as such is a uniquely human institution." Such statements must be regarded largely as ideals to be realised, if they are not to become ironic nebulosities, more or less. The relations of man to God and to all spiritual truth are entirely outside the sphere of state interference or control. The principle of individuality, in its higher forms, is at once advantageous to, and corrective of, society, and is needfully preservative of liberty against the encroachments of all-absorbing power.

Individuality is the spring of all character, the source of all energy for the good, and does not leave us with merely pallid and passive virtues. But theories are by no means infrequent which invest the state—as a political organisation merely, though necessary—with claims to devotion and self-subordination, which are utterly unreserved and indiscriminating, and are a menace to the integrity of the human individuality, from ethical points of view. Fichte argued stoutly that no law or commandment whatsoever was obligatory save only as conscience confirmed it: the obligatoriness of ethical law was, for him, absolutely devoid of exterior foundation. Fichte was absurdly extreme in laying it down that conscience can never deceive us, as historical fanaticisms, self-deceptions, and aberrations of the moral sense abundantly prove. He seems to me, in his assumed infallibility of conscience, to have overlooked the relativity of our moral judgments, I mean, judgments as to duty relative to ourselves, not as to duty in itself, even though it may be true that we have to act with such conscience as we have in the end. Not every conscience is of equal value; every conscience exhibits but a relative degree of perfection, and calls for enlightenment and increasing delicacy. This all the more because conscience or the moral nature is so complex—not the simple thing it was thought in pre-evolutional times to be. Free play for the exercise of spontaneous individuality is of fundamental importance and value, with the freedom therein involved; and there is inherent guarantee in the true nature of individuality, as

have defined its relation to end, that it shall not fail of its service to the whole or humanity. I do not care to dogmatise on concrete matters or cases of ethical reconstruction; I am only concerned with the maintenance of ethical principles, which are often not so carefully preserved in reconstructive proposals as is dogmatically claimed or asserted. The precise application of ethical law in concrete cases does not at all appear to me to be always so easy or certain as some airy dogmatists suppose. At any rate, the abridgment of liberty, the impairment of individuality, are to be shunned to every extent and degree possible, since, so far as they exist, they reduce the man from person to thing. A finer ethical sense would lessen the disregard of this truth to be seen in all public relations, where the ethical worth of the individual always tends—under Dr. Bosanquet's grotesquely overrated "communal" spirit—to be undervalued. It is curious to find a certain modern tendency run back to Fichte—the philosopher of *die Selbständigkeit* and *die Persönlichkeit*—who not very consistently viewed our duties to self as merely mediate or conditional, and our duties to others as immediate and unconditional. An illogical and not particularly ethical procedure, resulting in the treatment of our fellows merely as a means of perfecting ourselves. Not to my own individuality, but to humanity in general, according to his representations, do I owe anything in the way of duty. As if I could give anything to others, being and having nothing in myself! As if I had no duties of self-preservation and self-development, and were not bound to increase my value as a person! What a parasitic absence of all proper self-dependence! If it had been only a question of what he says in "The Destination of Man" concerning the interdependence of souls, it would have been all right,—“The individual finds and understands and loves himself only in another, and every spirit develops itself only in contact with other spirits.” If the one is to be essentially sacrificed, in the manner already indicated, to the many, rational theory of self-sacrifice is destroyed. But a rational judgment of

obligation is required for ethical value. Fichte has, however, meritoriously caught up the idea of development, in advance of Kant, in his resolution of moral action into a striving towards the ideal, so unattained, and in his insistence on the moral fulfilment of destiny. Of course, I realise myself both in and through society, but I, as an individual self, am certainly not the abstraction which certain philosophical writers are pleased to assert in their overweighted stress on the doctrine of community. My self is for me, unique, definite, concrete, and ultimate unit of experience. But this imports nothing of Rousseau's absurd tendency to treat man as a solitary individual; for the individual knows it is for society he is destined, and only claims full possession of himself in order that he may, in conscious voluntary self-dedication, give himself to the service of society or humanity. This means a vastly greater ethical value for his individuality than the mere intellectual recognition of his being, in quasi-naturalistic or mechanical fashion, "part" of an organic self or whole. There seems no need to forget, as is so often completely done, that in the very conception of an individual (*Individuum*), there is implied interconnection or *Zusammenhang*, a whole or wholeness from which, as thought-field, we set bounds, under specific marks, to the individual as a unity, and determine his essence. But the fixation is not a finality, since the individual, in his peculiar relation to the whole, tends to outrun or escape it, in the ethical manner or spirit just described. And thus it comes about that consciousness is not a mere existent in individualised centres, but "is a function that carries the individual beyond the limits of his particular mode of existence, and reveals to him his place as a member of an objective order." (Prof. J. E. Creighton, "The Philosophical Review," March, 1913.) Every person is thus a more or less universalised individual, and his individuality calls for the maximisation of his ethical value. For there is surely no more mischievous conception of individuality than that which regards it as closed, finished, stereotyped once and for all, instead of regarding it as a

mere projection, susceptible of constant enlargement or development in range, rationality, and moral power and interest. This enhancement of experience involves for the individuality an ascending scale of life-values, in which universal interests, standards, and ends, are the lure whereby it is drawn upwards and onwards in this advance. But the individuality retains its uniqueness, has a determinate form exclusively its own, and the issue is a life whose match has not been lived before. It does not find Münsterberg's "impersonal over-experience," "after eliminating all the characteristics of the individuality as such," necessary, justifiable, or inviting. Such an artificial depotentiation of our being "as the selfhood without individuality" suggested in his so-called "overself," may do for a fanciful world of values, but not for the real world of moral values, with which all men—and not merely web-spinning philosophers—have to do. If, as is sometimes (though none too discriminatingly) said, man does not make values any more than he makes reality, why should there be all this artificial construction of values that carry so great sense of unreality? Such a featureless unity as Münsterberg wishes for all souls of men is a very uninspiring residuum. We shall do better to abide by experience, our *Erlebtheit*, and find the ethical value of our individual being, in a more real way, as part of the ordered whole of reality, as spiritual. Of course, there must be no sacrifice of society to the individual, but there is something futile and absurd in the attempts we have been considering to make man attain the ideal by the artificial process of self-diremption just described. The same thing is true when Kant's duty to self is flouted, and the far from new or original remark made that "from the very notion of duty, it is impossible that I could owe myself any thing." ("Mind," July, 1917, p. 294.) We should be easily satisfied if we allowed a mere etymological reference to settle for us a matter of this kind. The feeling of oughtness in respect of duty-ideal is in truth a much wider affair; it is a fact of human consciousness too deep to be so restricted to a purely

social content. An ecclesiastical system may so absorb men as thus to eliminate their individuality, just as a philosophical system with an impersonal whole may effect the like unethical result, but the idea of duty in respect of the individual's own moral perfection and development is not thereby impugned or done away. There is only a failure in respect of these systems to do justice to ethical individuality. For if the ethical individual must treat the person of others as an end in itself, not merely as a means, why must he unethically treat his own person merely as a means? A man is clearly bound to treat his own person, equally with other persons, as an end in itself, and not merely as a means. It is for this reason that Höffding rightly insists that "there must be a thorough-going individualising of the ethical demand." Even his self-preservation and self-development will often outrun duty to self as end, and prove beneficial to others, a fact which constitutes an enhancement of the personal duty, and widens its binding character. If I am to "love my neighbour as myself," and should love my neighbour greatly, I can do so only as I have learned to love myself greatly or worthily. For, as Pascal said, "in a great soul, everything is great." This need not keep the duty and necessity of self-sacrifice from becoming so real to a man that, as Renan remarked, there is "no limit to the horizon which opens before him."

The great metaphysician need not be a great ethical individuality—that we have seen too well demonstrated; equally true it is that the distinguished ethicist may be greatly wanting on the metaphysical side; the great religious personality even may not be a strikingly ethical individuality; but the great ethical individuality may, by happy and fortunate combination, coincide with the great metaphysical thinker and the great religious personality. That is a rare type of greatness. But the great ethical individuality—and that is what now concerns us—has a greatness of his own, a uniqueness, savour, distinctiveness, from every other type or blend of greatness. But an ethical greatness, that should stand alone and unsupported,



is not without danger and peril; the fine gold is apt to become both thin and dim. That must not be, as we are here in the sphere of ethical achievement—of pure and achieved ethical values—which must always have an adequate metaphysical basis or support. There are life-situations which call for conscience, for responsibility, for duty-fulfilment, and in these we must seek the realisation of high and pure moral value—less as a matter of merit, more as a matter of course, because therein lies the fulfilment of our ethical being. But I am not saying that the soul is not conscious of herself in these ethical outgoings and advances, which are due, be it said, to the ethical “ought” within or behind us. In these experiences we have willed not only the particular deeds or doings involved, but in them have willed ourselves in the highest, achieving or realising new and higher values. And the process is carried through only and always under the ideal-positing of reason. We seek to realise them in freedom, with a will which is thus a strictly reasonable will. The true inwardness and unity of this whole ethical will-structure a great ethical individuality will be careful to maintain, for to him it would be intolerable to walk “with a tortured double self.” For he has an inward consciousness that morality is one, so that he may not snatch an ethical fragment, and be indifferent to the rest. To teach him that his ethical value lies thus in the quality of his will has been the abiding service of Kant in his stress on the good will—a stress anticipated, long before, by great schoolmen like Albertus Magnus and Pomponazzi, a fact too greatly overlooked. One of the finest features in Kant’s insinuations (in the “Critique of the Practical Reason”) is, that in such a will there must be, as “supreme condition of the *summum bonum*,” nothing less than “the perfect accordance” of the mind with the moral law. He admits this is only an ideal, but rightly demands that there shall be increasing approximation in “practical progress” towards this ideal. In all this one can appreciate the great ethical services of Kant, even if one does not—as I certainly do not—share in all respects his anti-intellectualism.

I can never bring myself to believe that only in one particular way—the way of moral or practical reason—has God revealed Himself, and not also in the superb workings of theoretic reason and speculative insight. The sundering is far too complete, but, despite this divergence, the palm must be assigned to Kant among modern ethicists. The supreme worth of the moral life he has asserted for all time, and nowhere has his own individuality been more marked than here, where he lays on every man the duty to realise his value as an ethical individuality. For it is precisely the personal or individual character of moral life or action that determines ethical value. It is the free, voluntary ethical outgoing of the good will, in scorn of consequence, that commands, and always will command, our homage and admiration. However varied the manifestations of ethical individuality, they all spring from the ideal of duty—an ideal that reigns high above all earthly vicissitudes, and shapes personality and character. It is our consciousness of the ethical value of our ideal and end that constitutes the value of our ethical pursuit. But the quest must be of our sense of absolute duty. For the ethical value of our individuality must be positive in character, and rich in quality. Its primary concern is, as Kant rightly insisted, not with making ourselves happy, but “how we should become worthy of happiness.” Amid much one-eyed altruistic talk, we may still recall the words of Ruskin,—“The real sacrifice of all our strength, or life, or happiness to others (though it may be needed, and though all brave creatures hold their lives in their hand, to be given, when such need comes, as frankly as a soldier gives his life in battle) is yet always a mournful and momentary necessity, not the fulfilment of the continuous law of being.” (“Ethics of the Dust,” Lect. VI.)

The reasonable character of ethical individuality, and its purpose-positing activity or teleological determination, must be clearly kept in view, as, with the consciousness of responsibility, marking it off from being a nature-product or constituting mere nature-life. Intelligence has its part to

play in the culture or upbuilding of ethical individuality, since it is the duty of every man to find out concretely what is his peculiar life task, and what are his responsible purposeful conceptions, which are to issue in his deeds. His world-view must not be allowed—not even if it be a supposedly religious one—to impede or contradict his ethical consciousness. With intelligence—as representing the universal or world-reason in us—must co-operate, in this upbuilding, the moral will, that that unified impulse of the “I” which alone constitutes ethical individuality may be realised. For the world of knowledge and the world of will are not two worlds, but two aspects of the one moral world. But I do not by this mean to deny the senses in which moral attitude may be one of valuing rather than of mere knowledge. What I am here concerned with is the fact that consciousness finds expression in the will. Questions of race, temperament, national and family type, all have place, of course, in determining the individuality of the single person. But these colourings or complexions are not differences of a kind to supersede or dispense with the worth and duty of studying the ethical upbuilding of individual character. The talk of Taine about race, environment, and time, as sufficient to account for individuality, is absurd in its neglect of the personal equation. In his hands, “the frame tends to take the place of the picture.” I have already spoken, both of the unique character, and of the developing character, of ethical individuality. It is in the enlarging consciousness of the ethical self, in the growing power and value of its ethical individuality, that the worth of the ethical spirit is seen and realised. In so treating the ethical type of individuality, we are dealing with something far other than that type of individuality which is all that certain leading philosophers of our time have given us, and which defines the individual merely in terms of its spatial characters and its physical exclusion of other things. It is the selfhood of the moral self with which we are here concerned, a self with freely chosen moral ideal. But it is as by nature social beings, not stark and isolated individuals,

that we possess this moral ideal, for while we preserve our ethical individuality in its integrity, it is yet in the life of organic humanity that we find our true life, and from the power or principle that underlies the whole that we derive our strength and inspiration. The ripeness and fulness of ethical individuality will be drawn from the ideal fulness which supports the whole—the one vast human organism. Social evolution is possible, just because the ethical individual is no abstract and isolated individual, but a *socius*, with capacities for service, sympathy, and fellowship, within the encircling sphere of the organic whole. He is such as under the sway of the moral “ought.” Obligation is imposed by this conscious possession of moral ideal. Royce talks much of the “attentively selected” ideal of the self, and of its “choosing” the ideal, and this is right, for it must be freely chosen. But it must not, for all that, be supposed that the ideal is what it is, simply because it is chosen. The ideal is not simply of the individual, neither is it furnished by society; its ideal source is behind and deeper than either the individual or the system of society. The ethical individual is constitutive of society, and not merely constituted by it; and his moral ideal, however much developed by interactions with society, does not come from society, does not spring from its relationships, but is of his own essence. But that does not keep his ideal from being also social, as he himself is by nature and destination. For the social side of the self is to be regarded as having a place that is fundamental; and not the individual aspect only. Individuality is thus transcended in our relations, but never annulled or abandoned. But to treat the moral ideal as not intrinsic or inherent in man, but mere fruit of development, or result of environment, can never be a satisfactory account of man as man. As we have seen the sense in which the self is social, so must we recognise the sense in which society is essentially individual, and the man not a product, but an original and producing power. Self and society belong to one moral cosmos; and though we have, for the avoidance of what is confused and ill-defined,

differentiated duty to self from duty to others, yet there is, of course, a certain sense in which every duty to self is, at the same time, fulfilment of a duty to others—to the moral whole. Our moral individuality will react beneficially on others, on the community, from direct and intense culture and development of our inmost nature. For no other can fulfil the duty of self-culture in me, any more than I can perform that duty in and for any other. It has already been made apparent, how every duty fulfilled to others makes for my own ethical good. All this play of individuality is necessary, for, if each individual were like every other, the community of individuals would cease to have any interest for us.

It is with conscious individuality we are now concerned, where the ethical individual is himself all the time, and here, as Prof. J. H. Tufts has said, "since the moral self is completely rational, completely social, it has a standard and motive and authority which are universal." (Garman Commem." "Studies in Philosophy and Psychology," p. 19.) The free exercise of reason, the practical reason, is necessary throughout the whole process of the realisation of the ideal—a process of the self, and a process within the self. The "I" in its knowing activity, projects an ideal, which it seeks to realise by the action of the will, reasonable will, rightly understood, being central in our ethical activities. Thus it comes that, in the ethical self-positing of the "I," there is something creative. This "I" has relations to things other and larger than itself; there is no reason why the unity of the moral personality should fail to recognise its own organic and relational character. But relations are, of course, not entities, and it is not admissible, without cause shewn, to suppose relations to be of more significance than the things or beings themselves. It is through real moral action that ethical personality is developed, but such personality is itself the source and spring of moral productiveness. The unified character of ethical personality must be maintained against all tendencies to resolve it into a psycho-physical aggregation or conglomerate of particular willings and

representations. For the essence of ethics is the being, and not merely the doing, of an autonomous self, whose "active energy," says Spencer, "wells up from the depths of consciousness." The final ground of all being, for that matter, is ethical, no less than rational. Eucken has a good deal to say of the "rightful claims" of the state over against the individual with his "threatened isolation" and "growing apathy," but is yet compelled to admit that a system "which places the individual above all else must undoubtedly prove superior to any other system in originality, mobility, and variety." (Art. "Individuality" in Hastings' Ency., Vol. VII.) Nor should it be overlooked how often the "isolation" of the individual has induced, so far from "apathy," the highest spiritual energy and the greatest mental activity, with incalculable benefit and enrichment to the world. We could as little spare the great individuality of a Newman with his "isolation," as we could the powerful individuality of a Johnson with his endless socialities. In any case, the freedom of the individual, in life and thought, cannot be filched away without serious loss. And as for the state, it is founded on the idea or principle of right, and its embodying this principle is a thing of moral value; the state must realise its function as an independent ethical fabric for the administration of public justice. One can well agree with Spinoza that "the end of the state is liberty, that man should in security develop soul and body, and make free use of his reason." But, on the other hand, one must emphatically repudiate Spinoza's denial of individuality or self-determination to finite beings; his dissolution of all real being in the one indivisible substance was no happy affair. The individual does not exist to be treated even by the state only as a means. Ethical individuality stands for the wholeness of our nature, as permeated and suffused with ethical spirit, when fronting humanity in the wholeness of its ethical possibilities. It is as member of the one vast ethical system or body that the ethical individuality is inspired to yield its own peculiar and distinctive ethical contribution to the moral wealth of the whole, so far is it from

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being egoistically arrayed against that totality. This it does under the impulse of the moral ideal which, as a fact within our experience, is yet not a fact derived entirely from our experience. The moral ideal has always stood out to men as an unattained and unfulfilled ideal. Ulrici urges that we must go out beyond experience in forming the ideal concept of the highest possible perfection of the human being or essence; it is not without experience, he says, but certainly not through experience. ("Gott und der Mensch," Vol. II, pp. 84-85.) This accords with what I have already urged as to the moral ideal being deeper than either the individual or society. And one may surely say that the ethical individuality, in seeking fulfilment of the moral ideal, must be under the lead of reason, dynamic and directive. Morality is not made by thought, but is "recognised by reason through a necessity which is antecedent to all subjective activity." But the ethical individual would, as we have seen, be unintelligible without relation to other selves. The true end of ethical individuality must be taken to be the perfection of self and others in the order of human life, as, for it, the thing of intrinsic and abiding value. In this reference to others, one may recall the remark of Wundt that such "altruism always belongs to the ethics of feeling." Green's end for man as the "abiding satisfaction of an abiding self" is, therefore, taken by him to imply man "as living in the successful pursuit of various interests which the order of society, taking the term in its widest sense, has determined for him." It is in such interactions of the self, in its devotement to the ideal, that ethical harmony and adjustment are to be realised. Thus thought is kept from circling too much around the self, a necessary precaution while maintaining the integrity of ethical individuality. A man's best or ideal self—which is to be realised—is his best for others as well as for himself. I agree with Höffding that the best development of the individual may not necessarily so serve society, but I think it will do so if it is an ethical development. But it is a long and toilsome road before some individualities, that of Goethe for example, un-

derstand and realise wherein their own peculiar power and individuality lie. When Goethe did make the discovery, he remained—although he could say, “where I cannot be moral, my power is gone”—predominantly an intellectual individuality, as compared, say, with Carlyle, who was a nearer representative of the categorical imperative individualised, though no perfect one. Ethical individuality neither stands absolutely by itself, nor hangs uncertainly in the air, but is deep-set in the moral order. Of this order it was well said by Trendelenburg, in his “Historical Contributions to Philosophy,” that “an ethical philosophy which would exclude pleasure would be contrary to nature; and one which would make a principle of it would be contrary to spirit.” This realisation of one’s true self in and for others can, of course, only be a gradual affair—implies, as Green says, “a progressive determination of the idea of the end itself.” For the activity of reason is not finished and perfect; moral intelligence is a developing magnitude. The harmonization of all the impulses and forces of life is not soon accomplished. But this progressive aspect must not obscure the duty to make the individuality a rounded affair, to form the personality into a totality. Such a microcosm it should certainly be. To make of itself and its manifold activities a relative whole, is precisely its life-work. And as for the society aspect, there is always the question whether the society realises the conditions that in it one is treated as end, and not merely as a means—a test too often and too easily overlooked. The subservience of the actual to the ideal must be our individual and steadfast aim. The greatest conditioned good that is possible can be actualized in no other way. A great love of the infinite ideal will raise us, and help us realise the ideal self. “*Rarum est enim, ut satis se quisque vereatur.*” It will enlarge the circle and widen the scope of our self-determining freedom, to embrace the ideal so. Endless is the vista of vital and concrete moral progress opened by the possibilities and demands of the ethical ideal. As for the creative office of the ethical individuality, this belongs to him as participant



in the social whole, taken in the largest sense, for he may find his *alter ego* in another continent than his own; the ideal community may, for him, be the community of all mankind. Not, I think, without large horizons and long views can the reciprocities and interdependence of self and the community or social whole be rendered satisfactory to some minds—a fact too rarely recognised. But this must be without the tendency towards sentimental dissolution of real selfhood in the mere idea of humanity. The ethical individual knows he cannot be a morally detached individual, but must create new value for himself as a person, by his life-task within and for the social whole. Ever straitened within himself he must be till this life-task, this ethical warfare, be accomplished. It is the nature, the very genius, of true life—life creative of new value—that it should be so. Such life has its ideal extensions, its moral extensions of the present, which must be kept in view. My ethical individuality is not merely an individual value, but a value that concerns the world; is not merely a present value, but endures through time. Such I take to be the conservation of value in the ethical realm—the realm of ends, where man is legislator as well as subject.

It must be evident what redemption from moral monotony, from ethical sameness and tameness, springs out of the diversities of ethical individuality. But, of course, the fact of individuality cannot be so accentuated as to overlook the elements of sameness or likeness found in different individuals, for no antithetical aspects of sameness and individuality can be allowed to be such as to infringe or imperil the unity of the moral world, or to obscure the mutual and serviceable relations that must exist between these contrastive aspects. The value of my ethical individuality is realised in the ethical ends that stand out for me as individually mine—of supreme and unescapable value for me. For my moral responsibility is involved in this ethical choice of ends; no valuation by any other, or for any other, can for a moment take the place of the determinations of my own moral consciousness. That is my uniqueness as an ethical

individual; it belongs to no other, is indefeasibly my own. The conception of the individual *per se* is doubtless an abstraction; the individuality must be that of the concrete self of consciousness, as *here*, and as *this* and not *that*. I have the power, not only to posit myself as an independent subject over against world objects, but to distinguish different sensations, feelings, impulses, in myself, from myself and from one another. This self-consciousness is the condition and the presupposition of my self-determination. It is also true that the universal is present in the individual, but if you make the universal that which purely constitutes the individual, so that the individual is no longer known save in its universal guise or aspect, you destroy the individual altogether, and merge it in, or confound it with, the generic type of selfhood. It is then no longer true that the individual is the real. But, in less formal modes of speech, it is as self-conscious that the individual is real, with interest as a concrete individual in the whole world of reality. This consciousness of moral personality becomes at length the sovereign fact in experience. In this consciousness of its own intrinsic value, the soul chooses ends and objects that have for it meaning or value. We exaggerate what ethical laws, codes, maxims, can do. Ethical individuality, when finely exemplified, does far more than these, for it takes up into itself, and embodies, the free creative spirit of virtue, whereby it makes for itself ethical discoveries and divinations, and translates them into action or practice in the most diverse circumstances and variegated forms, so that moral splendour, moral beauty, moral fitness, moral sublimity, result. The ethical value of such individualised life and action has immediate significance for others—and that of the finest character. It is because, in moral matters or duties, so much falls to be decided by individual judgment, that ethical individuality has such large scope and free play. Many of the greatest issues in life are thus involved: the pages of biography teem with proofs. Ethical study, so conceived, is far more impelling and inspiring than is ordinarily imagined. It is an unilluminated view which re-

guards ethics as an order of iron rule or leaden uniformity, with no play of inventive genius or faculty. I have not at all, in saying these things, been forgetting that the sphere of ethical individuality is confined to moral obligation, but neither am I forgetting that the domain of moral obligation is always extending, a fact too often neglected or unperceived. The genuine inwardness of the whole moral process must be steadily kept in view, as consisting in the consent of the will to what forms its own good, under a sense of moral obligation which is inward, never imposed from without. All this under the command of, and in conformity with, reason, as mine. The invisible things of ethics—love, honour, justice, goodness, and the rest—are the values which, so far as they are mine, make my ethical individuality what it distinctively is. I do not make (save in the subjective or idealistic sense), nor can I alter, these ethical values; 'tis they that make me. This belongs to their absolute aspect, however relative they must always appear in me. My being is measured by my degree of relative perfection. My individuality is not mere defect, limitation, or hindrance, as it has sometimes been taken to be, but represents the nobility of the force which I am, in that I am so far from any mere congeries of atoms, or any sort of arithmetical sum. My individuality means that I am not a mere part or function of anything, nor a mere determinate appearance of a universal soul, nor a drop in the pantheistic ocean, but a born original, so far at least as to have properties or qualities that differentiate me from every other. This does not keep my individuality from being a developing whole, as various and discordant impulses are controlled and organised into the more coherent and harmonious whole which I become. Nor does it keep me, as an ethical individual, from the needful task of more fully adjusting my individuality to the social system in which I am set. This should be natural, but is often painfully sacrificial; as said George Eliot: "We can have the highest happiness—such as goes along with being a great man—only by having wide thoughts and much feeling for the rest

of the world as well as for ourselves; and this sort of happiness often brings so much pain with it that we can only tell it from pain by its being what we choose before everything else, because our souls see it is good."

The twofold progressive realisation which has just been spoken of moves towards unity and enlargement of the developing self. This unified and developed self finds its self-fulfilment in freely giving itself to the service of the race or the social whole. Such self-fulfilment may remain always more or less an ideal, but it is an ideal which the ethical self can never relinquish. Nor does the individuality become lost, or lose its distinctive colour, in the process; nay, the distinctive quality or colouring remains, taking only richer hues, deeper tints, and finer shades, from the process. It has been said that Herder, for example, made everything he learned, whether as philosopher, historian, or poet, *Herder*. But the developmental and interactive processes do not fix and predetermine me, Spencer-wise, as a mere "resultant," for it belongs to my unique individuality to prove and show what my individual initiative, personal projections, and particular achievement, shall be. This it does only by reaching out to an end beyond itself, even though we have seen it to be an end in itself; for the divine dignity of the individual spirit is unattainable save in the outreachings of sympathy, love, and service. In the nature of the case, the individual must stand in relations, and needs the intercommunion of being, with the expansions, repulsions, and discipline involved therein, for the attainment of the high ethical individuality which is his goal. But, as such an individuality, he will neither lose himself in society, nor merge himself in the state. As Royer-Collard remarked: "Human societies are born, live, and die upon the earth; there they accomplish their destinies. But they contain not the whole man." "We, individuals, each with a separate and distinct existence, with an identical person, we, truly beings endowed with immortality, have a higher destiny than that of states."

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